

# NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

## COMMODORE HARRY A. BADT, UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

Harry Asher Badt was born in Tyler, Texas, on September 22, 1884. He completed high school in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, prior to entering the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from his native state in 1904. Graduated on June 5, 1908, he served the two years at sea, as then required by law, before he was commissioned Ensign on June 6, 1910. He subsequently advanced in rank to that of Commodore, to date from September 8, 1944 and was transferred, in that rank, to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy on April 7, 1947.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in 1908, he joined the USS WEST VIRGINIA and in June 1909 transferred to the USS YORKTOWN. He reported on board the USS CALIFORNIA in May 1910 and while attached to that battleship participated in the Nicaraguan Campaign in 1912. From August 1913 until October 1914 he continued duty afloat as Senior Engineer Officer of the USS ANNAPOLIS and as such took part in the occupation of Vera Cruz in 1914. He next attended the Postgraduate School, Annapolis, Maryland, and during the period September 1915 to June 1916 continued instruction at Columbia University, New York, New York, from which he received the degree of Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Ordered to the Navy Yard, New York, New York, he assisted in fitting out the USS ARIZONA and joined that battleship as Assistant Engineer Officer upon her commissioning on October 17, 1916. Detached from the ARIZONA in April 1917, he again had fitting out duty, this time in the USS MINNEAPOLIS, building at the Navy Yard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He reported on board that cruiser as Engineer Officer upon her commissioning, July 3, 1917 and while on board the MINNEAPOLIS participated in the convoy of troop transports and cargo ships in the Atlantic during World War I. He served briefly in the USS MINNESOTA, April to September 1918, then again reported on board the USS ARIZONA to serve as Navigator. The ARIZONA operated with the Naval Forces in British waters and in December 1918 assisted in escorting the GEORGE WASHINGTON, which transported President Woodrow Wilson to Brest, France.

From June 1920 to February 1923 he was assigned to the Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., after which he commanded the USS SIMPSON, operating with Naval Forces in Europe. Under his command, the SIMPSON assisted in the evacuation of Greek and Armenian refugees from Turkey. Detached from command of that destroyer in July 1924, he was ordered to the William Cramp and Sons Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the USS MARBLEHEAD was building. He served as Engineer Officer from her commissioning, September 8, 1924 until January 1926, participating in a Pacific cruise, visiting ports at Hawaii, Australia, New Zealand, Samoa and Tahiti.

In March 1926 he returned to the Naval Academy, where he was an Instructor in the Department Electrical Engineering and Physics until June 1928, after which he commanded the USS NOKOMIS. That vessel, under his command, participated in hydrographic surveys off the north-east coast of Cuba. Again assigned as an Instructor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at the Naval Academy, he remained there from June 1930 to January 1933 and the next month assumed command of the USS ARGONNE. In addition, he served as Commander of the Aleutian Islands Survey Expedition, concentrating in charting the Adak-Atka area. In April 1934 he reported as Operations Officer on the Staff of Commander Minecraft, Battle Force and Commander Minecraft, U. S. Fleet, USS OGLALA flagship. During the summer of 1934, the OGLALA, based at Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, was temporarily attached to the Aleutian Islands Survey Expedition. The charts prepared by this expedition and the previous one were used by our forces during World War II.

He headed the Recruiting Section, Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, from July 1935 to June 1937, after which he attended the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. Completing instruction there in May 1938, he next assumed command of the USS TUSCALOOSA. On December 18, 1939, while that cruiser was operating on neutrality patrol in the Atlantic Ocean, she sighted the German ship COLUMBUS. She escorted the German vessel until the latter reached the three hundred mile limit on December 19, there the Nazi craft was sighted by a British destroyer. The German skipper scuttled and abandoned his ship and the five hundred and seventy-six survivors were taken on board the TUSCALOOSA and transported to New York.

Detached from the TUSCALOOSA in April 1940, he returned to the Bureau of Navigation (redesignated in 1942 the Bureau of Naval Personnel), where he was Director of the Enlisted Personnel Division until April 1942, then became Director of Special Projects. In the latter capacity, he was the Bureau of Naval Personnel representative in the planning, building and organization of the Naval Training Stations, Farragut, Idaho; Bainbridge, Maryland and Sampson, New York. In September 1942, he reported as Commanding Officer (title changed to Commandant in October 1942) of the Naval Training Station (redesignated in April 1944 Commander Naval Training Center). "For exceptionally meritorious conduct...from September 16, 1942 to November 1, 1945..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit. The citation further states in part::

"Entering upon the vital task of fulfilling the demands of the Fleet for urgently needed enlisted personnel, Commodore Badt was personally responsible for establishing and placing into operation a vast naval training program. Exercising initiative and judgment, he ably coordinated the varied activities of this continually expanding station for an efficient program during a critical period of the war..."

On June 17, 1944, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by Hobart College, Geneva, New York.

He was relieved of active duty on June 1, 1946 and after hospitalization was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy on April 1, 1947.

In addition to the Legion of Merit, Commodore Badt had the Nicaraguan Campaign Medal; Mexican Service Medal; Victory Medal, Escort Clasp (World War I); American Defense Medal, Fleet Clasp; American Campaign Medal; and the World War II Victory Medal.

He died at the Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, on September 8, 1967.